British Invasion Michael Galuppo

The British Invasion is the description of the time when England’s music was finally being recognized in the United States. For years, American music was exported to England, and was popular there, but never the other way around. Americans did not find British music as good as American music, and for this reason, it wasn’t available in the US. As a result, the British music industry had little to no exposure anywhere other than England.

But in 1963, a British band came around that changed this.

After the Beatles became a massive success in the US, the next two years saw a huge increase in British bands becoming successful in the US. Most notable were The Kinks, The Who and The Rolling Stones. The Kinks were formed by two brothers Dave and Ray Davies. They are today known as one of the most important rock bands in the development of modern rock. In the 1960’s they became popular in America with their one hit wonder, *You Really Got Me,* which topped the charts in the UK, and reached number 10 in the US charts. The song was covered about 15 years later by Van Halen, which boosted the popularity of the original song, and is probably the reason the song remains so well-known today. After a decline in record sales and popularity, the band broke up in 1995. They were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, their first year of eligibility.

The Who and The Rolling Stones are both names that everyone knows, and they were an even bigger contribution to the British invasion than The Kinks. Both of these bands are still touring and recording today, and they still have large fan bases despite the rise of other types of rock. But these two bands have stuck to their guns and always played good old-fashioned rock n roll. The Rolling Stones played during the halftime of Super Bowl XL, and The Who recently played during Super Bowl XLIV’s halftime. The Rolling stones have album sales of more than 200 million worldwide and in 2008, *Billboard* magazine ranked them at number 10 on "The Billboard Hot 100 Top All-Time Artists", which crowns them the second most successful group in the history of *Billboard* Hot 100 chart. The Who were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, their first year of eligibility. *Time* magazine wrote in 1979 that "No other group has ever pushed rock so far, or asked so much from it and *Rolling Stone* magazine wrote: "Along with The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, The Who complete the holy trinity of British rock."

These bands not only made it big in American during the British Invasion, but they took a nearly dead music industry in England and turned it into a huge money maker for the country’s music and entertainment industries. In 1960, before the British Invasion, American music was much more popular that British music, and for that reason, the UK charts were limited in music from British bands, and only a few classical charts defined the best of England’s music industry. In 1963, a few British rock artists appeared on the UK charts, most notably the Beatles songs “From Me to You”, She Loves You”, and “I Want to Hold Your Hand”. After The British Invasion, the UK charts were filled with British rock artists such as those mentioned above, and the British Invasion sparked a huge turnaround in the British music industry. Today, their music industry in called The British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and it has a membership that includes all of the four major record labels, Warner Music Group, EMI, Sony Music Entertainment, and Universal Music Group. EMI, or Electric & Musical Industries Ltd. is a record company that originated in England, and it has always been one of the top companies in the world.

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